

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 PM-05

H-01 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

IO-13 /092 W

-----116912 091830Z /44

R 090325Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9143

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AXEMBASSY VIENTIANE 685

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 5410

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, IATA, XB

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: CONVERSATION WITH IATA REP

REF: BANGKOK 27111

1. EMBOFF TALKED WITH IATA REP MCGOWAN 12/7 TO INQUIRE ABOUT PROGRESS IN REOPENING AMBER ONE AIR ROUTE OVER VIETNAM AND LAOS. ACCORDING TO MCGOWAN, NEXT STEP WILL BE CONVENING OF MEETING AMONG ICAO, IATA AND FUR NATIONS PRIMARILY INVOLVED IN AMBER ONE ROUTE CONTROVERSY (HONG KONG, THAILAND, VIETNAM AND LAOS).

2. MCGOWAN SAID OCTOBER 28 TRIP TO INDOCHINA WAS ORIGINALLY MEANT TO BE FOR A MEETING IN VIENTIANE WHICH WAS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN LAOS AND VIETNAM. ICAO HAS SUGGESTED MEETINGS IN HANOI ANYTIME IN PERIOD FEBRUARY 5-20, 1978 TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS.

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3. MCGOWAN IS LESS SURE THAN WILLIS (REFTEL, PARA 1) ABOUT SRV'S "COMMITMENT" TO ALLOW ALL AIRLINES TO USE AMBER ONE. ALTHOUGH HE SAID NEGOTIATIONS WERE ON BEHALF OF ALL RPT ALL AIRLINES, NOT JUST IATA MEMBERS, HE FORESAW PROBLEMS WHEN DISCUSSIONS GET AROUND TO SPECIFIC QUESTION OF AMBER ONE USAGE BY AIRLINES SUCH AS PAN AM, CHINA AIRLINES OR KOREAN

AIRLINES. HE IS OF THE OPINION THE SRV WILL DEMAND THAT AIRLINES NOT USING AMBER ONE (AND PAYING OVERFLIGHT FEES) SKIRT THE ENTIRE ECONOMIC ZONE OF THE SRV. THUS THE QUESTION OF SPRATLEY/PARACEL ISLANDS OWNERSHIP MAY BE DRAGGED IN. BUT THAT, MCGOWAN SAID, IS A PROBLEM IATA WILL GLADLY LEAVE TO ICAO TO WRESTLE WITH.

4. GIVEN THE NEW REGIME IN THAILAND, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, MCGOWAN IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT CHANCES OF REACHING AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE QUICKLY ONCE THE INVOLVED PARTIES SIT DOWN TO TALK. QUESTION OF WHICH AIRLINES MAY USE REOPENED ROUTE, HOWEVER, COULD TAKE LONGER DEPENDING ON DEGREE TO WHICH VIETNAMESE WISH TO INJECT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO TALKS.

5. MCGOWAN SAID THERE HAD BEEN TALK OF ATTEMPTING TO CONVENE WIDER CONFERENCE TO INCLUDE MALAYSIA, PHILIPPINES AND SINGAPORE. SUCH A MEETING WOULD EXAMINE POSSIBILITY OF REOPENING ALL INDOCHINA AIR ROUTES CLOSED SINCE 1975. IATA/ICAO PREFERENCE, HOWEVER, WAS TO DEAL WITH AMBER ONE QUESTION FIRST, AND IDEA WAS SHELVED.

6. IATA REPS TRAVELED TO HANOI IN PRIVATE JET OWNED BY FORMER PHILIPPINES AIRLINES PRESIDENT TODA (RATHER THAN SINGAPORE AIRLINES PRESIDENT).

7. ON OTHER MATTERS, MCGOWAN SKETCHED THE DEVELOPMENT OF IATA CONFERENCE FARE STRUCTURES AND GAVE SOME BACKGROUND ON PRESENT PROBLEMS IN SETTING FARES ON THE NORTH ATLANTIC. HE SAID LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IATA IS CONSIDERING ABANDONING ITS ATTEMPTS TO REGULATE NORTH ATLANTIC FARES AND THROWING THE PROBLEM BACK INTO THE LAPS OF THE GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED. AN IATA COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF FIVE AIRLINE PRESIDENTS (INCLUDING THOSE OF TWA, AIR INDIA, ALITALIA AND ONE OTHER EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN AIRLINE) WOULD MEET TO DECIDE WHETHER TO RECOMMEND AN EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF IATA MEMBERS TO ACO ON ABANDONING THE FARE STRUCTURE. THE MEETING WOULD BE HELD NEXT SUMMER, MCGOWAN SAID, AND ADDED THAT HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THE CONFERENCE WOULD ABANDON ITS PRICE-SETTING MECHANISM ON THE NORTH ATLANTIC ROUTES. HE WAS INTERESTED IN THE "LOW-FARE" CLAUSES OF THE BELGIAN AND SINGAPOREAN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, AND COMMENTED THAT IF THERE WERE LOWERING OF BRUSSELS-U.S. FARES, OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WOULD BE FORCED INTO LINE.
HOLDRIDGE

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